**SUMMARY OF THE OFFICE ACTION**

**1. Claims 1-17 are presently pending.**

**2. Claims 1-3, 7-9, 11-15 and 17 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,805,907 (Hagiwara).**

**3. Claims 4-6, 10 and 16 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,805,907 (Hagiwara) in view of Published US Patent Application No. 10/381,682 ("Bursill," which claims PCT priority from an application filed on September 25, 2001).**

**RESPONSE TO THE OFFICE ACTION**

**1. Claims 1-17 are presently pending.**

**2. Claims 1-3, 7-9, 11-15 and 17 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,805,907 (Hagiwara).**

It is absolutely critical to an appreciation of the failure of this rejection that a limitation essentially recited in every claim be understood and appreciated. That limitation is the terminology referred to as "..processor controlled times." This means, both by way of the literal meaning of the term, the disclosed meaning the specification and the interpretation of the term limited by arguments of record that the **time** for determining a **result** of a game is controlled by the processor, not by player initiated activity. Any activity performed by the processor which must and is initiated by player activity is not **"processor controlled."**

The processor controls the time of determination of the common game result determination by random number generation at processor timed intervals, which are not based on player input. Rather, the processor itself has software that determines when an outcome will be determined. Players pushing buttons or inserting coins or pulling handles do not determine the **time** when the result will be determined. Applicants are not aware of any art that performs this unique task. All other known systems prior to the present invention are **player controlled.**

The Examiners responds to the arguments presented in the Amendment filed 02 March 2007, by stating:

A. Applicant's first argument is that Hagiwara's games are initiated by coins. **It is asserted that this is not material, as Hagiwara has a CPU/Processor that determines results and time intervals.**

The response indicates that the limitations of the claims have not been appreciated nor have they been meaningfully addressed as a substantive limitation for their import with respect to a method step. The actual limitation in the claim is:

> "...**determining a result of a slot machine** game having actual or simulated reels **at processor controlled times or time intervals**;..."

The clear meaning of this limitation is that the processor, independent of any other events or actions, determines a **RESULT** of the slot machine at times and time intervals **CONTROLLED BY THE PROCESSOR**. This is not known to occur in any prior art system and is clearly not shown by Hagiwara. In all other slot machines and reel machines, the machine will not determine a game result in the slot machine (in an actual game, not a mere demonstration) until the game event is initiated by the player. The common ways in which results are determined by player initiation are pressing a button or touch screen to initiate play (as a time interval controlled by the player), pull a handle after coins or credit have been placed at risk (the time interval controlled by the player), or inserting a maximum number of coins in the machine (the time interval controlled by the player).

There is no processor or CPU control of the time interval between determinations of results. Looking at the disclosure of Hagiwara, it can be readily seen that the action of the dominant or central CPU is **responsive** to an external signal, just as is a single slot machine. Hagiwara states in claim 1 that the system has:

> "control means for **starting a given game in response to either a signal from at least one of said subordinate machines and a game starting command**, and controlling the progress of the game in accordance with a predetermined procedure and judging a result of the game won or lost;..." (**emphasis** added)

Hagiwara literally states that the determination of a result is responsive to external activity. **THIS IS NOT PROCESSOR CONTROL.** As the external activity is provided by players, such as coin or credit wagering, the CPU cannot perform the limitation of the claims of "...**determining a result of a slot machine** game having actual or simulated reels **at processor controlled times or time intervals**;..." This limitation is not taught by Hagiwara.

The "...signal from at least one of the subordinate machines..." is also a distinct activity controlled by the players at the subordinate machines. The player enters a game entry signal with coins at risk at the subordinate machine to initiate the signals. This is clearly player controlled.

This feature provides a function to the claimed system that is different from functions available in Hagiwara. As is well understood in the art, many game players

believe in hot streaks, especially for apparatus. In addition, players often will take excessive amounts of time in placing wagers. By having a machine that shows actual results on a self-initiated (CPU initiated) basis, results of actual play are shown to passersby and passive players. These passersby and players can be attracted to the game by seeing historical game **positive** results. Additionally, by having processor controlled intervals, players can be stimulated to play within prearranged processor controlled time intervals of play, and play more frequently, which is always to the house advantage.

Hagiwara states (In column 2, line 44- column 3, line 5) that although there may be a continuing demonstration game played, "When coins are bet, the game starts on various game starting conditions." Those various conditions may be a 30 second period if there are a number of machines wagered upon, or 50 seconds if only a first machine is wagered upon. In all instances, the game determination is initiated by external activity by a player. Even the time interval is controlled by activity of the players, that is how many players are present. The processor of Hagiwara therefore responds to external activity to determine a game outcome and does not determine a result of a slot machine at processor controlled times.

**Claim 1 as now pending reads:**

A gaming machine system, including: a processor determining a result of a slot machine game at processor controlled times or time intervals; and a plurality of terminals linked via communication means to said processor, the outcome at each said terminal being solely dependent on the single, communal result determined by said processor.

| CLAIM 1 | Hagiwara | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| A gaming machine system, including: | The slot machine according to the embodiment shown in FIG. 1 comprises one main machine 1 | |
| a processor determining a result of a slot machine game at processor controlled times or time intervals; and | The main machine 1 includes a central processing unit (CPU) 11. The CPU is connected to a symbol generator 12, for showing the pictures and patterns in the symbol rows, and a program memory 13 | **Hagiwara** has games initiated by player action, such as by coin insertion and play at a main machine. Although the amount of time after player initiation may be varied in the Hagiwara processor, the |

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| | for storing a program for letting the game proceed. | variations themselves are dependent upon player activity, and player activity will change the intervals. |
| a plurality of terminals communicatively linked to said processor, | three subordinate machines 2a-2c. The main machine 1 is connected to the subordinate machines 2a-2c by cables 3, 4a-4c made of optical fibers, wires or the like through a distributor 5. | |
| the outcome at each said terminal being solely dependent on the single, communal result | the CPU 11 starts the game according to the program stored in the program memory 13, selects a pay line for each subordinate machine in accordance with the number of coins betted and lets the game proceed. Meanwhile, CRT display device 6 and the CRT monitors 7a-7c display the proceeding of the game. ...A "win" is found while the game is going on. That is, it is judged whether a combination of symbols lined along the pay line when the symbols are stopped on the CRT screen agrees with a preset combination of symbols. When the former combination agrees with the latter, the CPU 11 computes a payment rate for each won combination of each subordinate machine. Then, the CPU 11 outputs a payment command to a corresponding subordinate machine. | **Hagiwara** has the CPU in a terminal determine the outcome, making other terminals appear to be dependent upon a terminal controlled by another player. |
| determined by said processor. | The coin paying-out mechanism of the subordinate machine which has received the payment | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | command pays out a number of coins in accordance with the payment command. The judgment of "win" is made by the CPU 11 based on a preset table of win combinations, a random number table or others. | |

The underlying technology of Hagiwara requires a main machine, that is, an actual player-accessible slot machine. The main machine performs the games on demand by a player seated at that main machine, upon entry of a wager and mechanical/electronic input into the slot main machine. After a player is operating the main machine, other players may engage other machines on which the play activity of the main machine that is transmitted to the satellite machines. Thus, the system of Hagiwara requires a player at a specific machine (the main machine) before the other machines may be engaged. The play on the other machines is controlled (by way of timing) by physical entry of input by the player at the main machine. This is substantively different from the system described in the present claims.

In the present technology, a processor that is not actually driven by a terminal, but rather which operates independently of a specific terminal, generates game events. These game events may even be provided without any player at any terminal, and the results are displayed on a communal display and/or on each of the terminals, whether or not wagering has occurred. Players may sit any one of or all of the terminals and wager money on a game that is performed by the common processor, rather than a processor at a specific terminal (main machine) that must be specifically engaged before any other terminal can be operated. These differences are significant. Hagiwara does not anticipate the practices of:

a) a processor determining a result of a slot machine game at processor controlled times or time intervals; (Claim 1)

b) at least one player making a wager on a slot machine game at any respective terminal; determining the result of the slot machine game with said processor (Claim 7)

c) whether or not said wagers have been made, rotating a plurality of moving reels included in said gaming machine system a predetermined or random number of times, (Claim 11)

These limitations in the independent claims are not shown by Hagiwara and the claims cannot be anticipated.

**Amended Claims 7 and 11**

Each of these independent claims 7 and 11 have been amended to recite in various terminology that that the determination of events are (Claim 7) "...at a repeated time interval controlled by the processor..."; or are (Claim 11) "...the results determined by rotating being initiated by a central processor at time intervals determined solely by the processor ..."

The arguments provided above with respect to the failure of Hagiwara to show the elements of the limitations of "processor controlled times or time intervals" apply on behalf of the new limitations added to claims 7 and 11 and to every claim dependent therefrom.

**3. Claims 4-6, 10 and 16 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,805,907 (Hagiwara) in view of Published US Patent Application No. 10/381,682 ("Bursill," which claims PCT priority from an application filed on September 25, 2001),**

Bursill does not enhance this rejection, nor overcome the deficiencies of Hagiwara with respect to the failure to have the processor control the times and time intervals for determination of event results. The system of Bursill is player controlled. The player initiates play on the system. Even a cursory review of the broadest aspects of Bursill shows that it is impossible for a processor to determine the times and time intervals for determination of a result as the Bursill system monitors a **live game**, and does not exhibit time interval control over bank of slots with a common outcome. Note the first statement in the specification that would normally describe the Summary of the Invention, paragraph [0007]:

> "According to a first aspect of the invention, there is provided a gambling **apparatus comprising: at least one sensor for monitoring the progress of a live gambling event having a set up period and an end-result period and generating at least a still representation of the live gambling event**; a display operable to be in communication with the at least one sensor and capable of showing the at least one still representation of the live gambling event; a communication link between the at least one sensor and the display; and a processor operable to be in communication with the display and **to provide an animation corresponding to the status of the live gambling event on the display**." (**emphasis** added)

The preferred embodiment, for example, is described in paragraph [0036] as:

> "The live gambling event described in relation to this embodiment of the invention is roulette but it is to be appreciated that any game that could be played in a casino could be used instead, such as card games, for example blackjack. As explained earlier, it is to be appreciated that each game of roulette has a setting-up period in which bets may be placed; a spinning period in which the roulette wheel is spun and an end-result period which begins when the wheel stops spinning and the ball has fallen into one of the slots in the wheel. Accordingly, the status of the game may be defined as being within one of these three periods. The roulette game 1 is played in the usual way, and bets are placed by individuals who are physically present at the roulette table. A first camera 2 is directed at the roulette table and also the surrounding area such that the casino pit staff and any players at the table are within its field of vision."

As is well understood, the interval for a game result in roulette is controlled by the croupier and by the range of time that it takes for a ball to drop and for all wagers to be resolved, each of which can affect the time and the time interval of play. There is no instruction of the subject matter of claim 1 to correct the deficiencies of Bursill. The rejection under 35 USC 103(a) must fail for at least that reason.

**Patentability of PREVIOUSLY ADDED Claim 17 -** This claim is also patentable. The claim recites, with **emphasis** added on terms to emphasize their importance, although not to the exclusion of other terms providing descriptions of novelty and unobviousness:

> A gaming machine system, including: **a processor determining a result of a slot machine game having actual or simulated symbols displayed in reel format at processor controlled times or time intervals**; and a plurality of terminals communicatively linked to said processor, the

**outcome at each said terminal being solely dependent on the single, communal result determined by said processor.**

No reference is believed to shown a communal processor independently determining times and intervals a specific reel format event result, and using that single reel format event result to determine wagering outcomes at a multiplicity of wagering terminals that have made a general wager on a reel event outcome.

**CONCLUSION**

All objections and rejections have been corrected or traversed. All rejections and objections should be removed and all claims allowed.

If the Examiner believes that an interview might expedite prosecution of the application or reduce issues, the Examiner is respectfully invited to call the attorney of record at **952.832.9090** during business hours, central Time Zone.

Respectfully submitted,

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